
MEETING HOUSE ECHOES Edith A. O'Leary Senior Center

Winter 2016 - Volume 41

North Reading, MA 01864

Dept. of Elder Affairs

Tel: 978-664-5600 Email:

mprenney@northreadingma.gov

Senior Center

157 Park Street

Third Meeting House
on the Common

Senior Center Hours:

Mon.-Thur. 8am-4pm

Fri. 8am-1pm

Director

Mary S. Prenney

Clerk

Mark Meehl

Programm. Manager

Jean Fitzgerald

Van Driver

Mechele Cronin

Board of Health

Sue Swansburg, RN

Outreach Assistant

Susan Tilton

Meal Site Managers

Brenda Bugden, Ron Visconti

Home Delivered Meals

Driver Dan Dishion

Council on Aging Board

Maureen Donato, Secretary

Rich Wallner V. Chair

Joe Veno

Frances Cheney

Jennifer Collins

Liaisons

Sgt. Derek Howe Police

Deputy Fire Chief

Barry Galvin,

Selectman

Steve O'Leary

Friends of the COA Officers

Hugo Wiberg III, Pres.

Angela Mauceri, V.Pres.

Tom DeSwarte, Treas.

Jean Fitzgerald, Sec'y.

COUNCIL ON AGING MISSION STATEMENT

The Council on Aging advocates for older adults by helping to meet their needs in areas of health, economic, social and cultural welfare.

The Council encourages maximum independence and seeks to improve the quality of life of citizens of the Town of North Reading.

From the Director — Mary Prenney

It was a long and joyous Holiday Season at the O'Leary Senior Center. Now, all the Christmas cookies and homemade fudge have been eaten and all the holiday decorations that were put up thanks to our "Friends" have been put away. Our food pantry donation bins could be a bit fuller (hint!), but our exercise classes have grown (perhaps due to all those cookies and fudge !)

In this New Year we are excited to have Susan Tilton our new Outreach Assistant join our staff. Susan comes with over 10 years' experience from a neighboring community. She will be with us part-time and looks forward to meeting and help serve our North Reading elders and their families.

I'm told by some that this is the best time of the year at the Senior Center. A quite cup of coffee or lunch with friends, or one of our special programs make the long days of winter seem not so long. And if you don't want to drive, we can always pick you up in our van (weather permitting).

I hope for those of you who are receiving this newsletter for the first time, and those of you have received newsletters since the first edition, enjoy it, learn from it, and most of all know that myself and the staff at the Senior Center are here to help you age in a well-informed manner.

And talking about our first edition.....Katharine Barr my friend and first only Newsletter Editor is passing on the baton...but not letting go of it completely. She will be available as our consultant and mentor. Thank you Katharine and the "force" of your baton will be greatly missed.

Best Wishes for a happy, healthy New Year!

From the Editor — Katharine Barr

So long sort of- !

Hard to believe, but it has been nearly 10 years since I began producing the Senior Center newsletter. It has been a great 10 years and it is time for a new captain of the ship. Please welcome Susan Tilton who joins the O'Leary Senior Center. Have fun Susan! Katherine Barr

DINING

Senior Dining at the Center

Mon. — Fri., noon, \$2.00 donation
(Call before 10:30AM the day before)

Home Delivered Meals

(formerly Meals on Wheels)
Mystic Valley Elder Services
(781) 324-7705, Ext. 300

TRANSPORTATION

FREE Van Transportation

In Town, for medical appointments, shopping, local for errands, to the Senior Center, Family Medical Center, Wilmington Lahey Satellite Clinic.

Shopping

Rides can be worked in during the day to in town Stop and Shop, Walmart, Dollar Store and Pharmacies.
(Call one day ahead to arrange a ride)

Need a Ride? Call TRIP

If you need to go places, and you don't or can't drive, here's an easy solution. Designate a friend, neighbor as your TRIP driver and that person will take you wherever you need to go. As your designated driver, he/she will be fully reimbursed for mileage they drive you. So it's a win-win situation for everyone! To sign up, contact MVES at 781-324-7705. Get out and enjoy life!

Eating Local – It's Fun!

We are going into our fifth year of supporting our local eateries. Diners are responsible for their own meals and gratuity. However, the van service and the comradery are FREE! This is a fun way to enjoy lunch with old and new friends.

This Winter, our delicious destinations are:

January 31st Kitty's Restaurant
February 28th Joe Fish
March 21st China Cuisine

Support Your Local Teams

Free Passes to N.R. High School Games

Do you have a grandchild, niece or nephew playing or are you just a local sports fan. Enjoy the High School football and basketball or other games? North Reading Senior Citizens can get FREE passes to all regular season High School games. Simply identify yourself as a Senior Citizen — and enjoy the game!



Snow Day Policy

If North Reading School is Cancelled then the transportation, programs and meals at the Senior Center will be cancelled for that day. Most likely if there is a delayed start to schools then the senior will also be closed. It is always best to call the center if you have any questions.

In Memory of/In Honor of" Envelopes

Envelopes North Reading Friends of the Council on Aging. Donations will help us fund the good works of the Center and the population it services. Envelopes may be picked up at the Center during regular hours.

New to Medicare?

Are you overwhelmed about the choices and decisions you need to make? Meet with a SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) counselor. Trained SHINE counselors offer free, in-person, confidential counseling on all aspects of Medicare and related insurance programs. To make an appointment call the Senior Center or the Regional SHINE Office at Mystic Valley Elder Services in Malden at 781-388-4845.

FREE Movies Continue!

Thursdays at 1:15 PM

Popcorn and Snacks are free.

January 12 Florence Foster Jenkins

February 9 Movie TBA

March 23 My Big Fat Greek Wedding 2

Please bring a friend or make a new one.

No reservations required!

Senator Tarr's Office Hours

Richard Curran visits Wednesdays

January 18th 9:30-10:30

February 15th 9:30-10:30

March 15th 9:30-10:30

Save the Date

April 8th

HEALTH FAIR



Mark your calendar for Health Fair on Saturday, April 8th at North Reading High School on Main Street. The Fair is being Sponsored by Mystic Valley Elder Services. in Conjunction with the North Reading Community Impact Team. More information will follow.

From the NEW Outreach Assistant – Susan Tilton

First and foremost, I would like to thank the Town of North Reading for the warm welcome and for giving me the opportunity to work here at the Edith O'Leary Senior Center/

In my first month here I have been busy learning about local services, area organizations, and what is offered under the Mystic Valley Elder Services umbrella.

Mary Prenney has mentioned at various events that the outreach position is “new” in the department. However, I know it is not something new to the staff. They all have been doing outreach in many areas. I have joined a team of very passionate and caring people. This position will help the Director meet the needs of the ever growing population of North Reading seniors and their families.

In the spring the Center will be offering some new programs and presentations. Visit or call the Center to find out more information or to suggest ideas about programs or workshops you would like to see offered.

Our newsletter covers only some of what is offered at our Center. The building here maybe small, however it serves as the “Meeting Place” for so many. I have already met so many nice and interesting people at the Senior Center and look forward to working with many more. Please feel free to call or email me at the Center to introduce yourself or let me know if you are looking for information about services that you or a loved one may need (you might be surprised by what is available).

Susan Tilton

978-664-5600

stilton@northreadingma.gov



Celebrating a Birthday? Celebrate With Us!

Call the Center and let us know when you're about to have a birthday. Then come and enjoy a delicious lunch FREE! We might even sing “Happy Birthday” to you!

Project Linus Coffee Hour

The Linus group meets the first Friday of the month at 10 a.m. . This group is part of a national organization of volunteers who create handmade blankets, hats, etc. The items are donated to children that are seriously ill or traumatized. If you knit, crochet or sew or just want to help you are welcome to join. Coffee, sweets and good conversation are free.

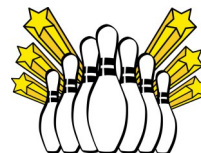
Physical Activity Positively Affects Your Health

Regular physical activity when performed:

- Reduces the risk of dying prematurely.
- Reduces the risk of heart disease.
- Reduces the risk of diabetes.
- Reduces the risk of high blood pressure.
- Helps lower blood pressure.
- Reduces the risk of colon cancer.
- Reduces feelings of depression and anxiety.
- Helps control weight.
- Helps build healthy bones muscles and joints.
- Helps older adults prevent falls
- Promotes psychological well-being.

Wii bowling Team Update

**Tournament: January 30th
at Wilmington**



The O'Leary Senior Center's Wii Bowling Team has been meeting alternately once a month with the team from the Wilmington Senior Center. A “Wii Bowling Invitational Champions First Place Trophy” is at stake and has been honorably displayed at the two Centers at various times. The tournament not only brings the pride of being champions, but has evolved into a great friendship between the two Centers. Our Current members are: Ann Connors, Ann Donahue, Doris Florence, Jean Fitzgerald, Carolyn Martino and Mechele Cronin. The team is always s looking for new members to join the fun and take part in some “friendly” competition. Please call the Center for more information. We hope to regain possession of our champion trophy on January 30th at Wilmington. Feel free to come and support or Join in.

So Much to Join In

Exercise classes are held at the Center 3 days a week. See page listed for times. Also several other social activities happen 5 days a week. Most things are offered are free.



Spot A Stroke F.A.S.T.

F.A.S.T. is an easy way to remember the sudden signs of a stroke. **Call 9-1-1 for help right away.**

Face Drooping: Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Ask the person to smile. Is the person's smile uneven?

Arm Weakness: Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

Speech Difficulty: Is speech slurred? Is the person unable to speak or hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence like: "The sky is blue." Is the sentence repeated correctly?

Time to call 9-1-1: If someone shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 9-1-1 and get the person to the hospital immediately. Check the time, so you'll know when the first symptoms appeared.

When You HAVE To Call 911, But Cannot Speak:

Massachusetts' 911 Silent Call procedures allow you to use a touchtone phone or cell phone to call for help. If you are unable to communicate your emergency over the phone, due to a physical disability, domestic violence, home invasion, or any other reason, follow these instructions –

First...dial 911

Once the call is answered, indicate your need by pressing the appropriate number:

If you need :

Police, press 1

Fire, press 2

Ambulance, press 3

The 911 dispatcher may ask questions that require YES or NO answers:

Press 4 for YES

Press 5 for NO

The North Reading Police will be starting a New Citizens Program This spring located at the Senior Center. Please watch for more information or call the center. Program is slated for March.



Got Unused or Outdated Prescription Drugs?

Sgt. Derek Howe, NRPD

Sgt. Howe reminds residents there is a free, safe, anonymous way to dispose of unused or expired prescription medications and hypodermic needles that are capped or in a special "sharps" container. There are MedReturn Drug Collection units available in the lobby at the North Reading Police Department 150 Park Street, where the medication can be disposed of anonymously at any time. If you have any questions about this program, please call the police station at (978) 664-3131.

Flint Memorial Library 147 Park Street

- Every Tuesday from 10:30-12:30PM "Mah Jongg and Game Day" will be held in the library activity room. Mah Jongg will be played and taught during the meet-up as well as other board games of your choice. In addition to Mah Jongg, some games—such as Scrabble—will be provided, but feel free to bring your own games in for the event. Light refreshments will be available. This event is open to all and no sign-up is required. Come along and bring some friends!
- **New Telescope** Arrived and can be checked out by anyone 18 and over.
- **Adult Yoga** on Wednesdays 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- January 21st 7 to 10 p.m. **Open Mic Night**

Do you sing, play music, tell jokes, read poetry or perhaps do something else you would like to share with others? People of all ages are welcome to display their talents.

Chimney and Woodstove Safety

Most chimney fires occur because there is a buildup of creosote. North Reading Deputy Fire Chief Barry Galvin reminds residents to have your chimney cleaned before each heating season. Have your chimney and flue checked for cracks in the mortar joints, so flames or dangerous gases do not enter the structure. If purchasing a wood stove, be sure it is listed by Underwriters' Laboratory (UL) or another recognized testing agency. A building permit must be obtained prior to installation and an inspection made by the building inspector prior to initial use. Allow at least 36 inch clearance around the heating appliances to prevent combustibles from coming in contact with the heat source.

Things Divorcing Seniors Should Consider Before Splitting

Known more commonly as “gray divorce”, the 50-and-over demographic is now more than twice as likely to get divorced as they were only two decades ago. Going through a divorce can mean disrupting the personal lives of your friends and family, and generally upturning your life.

Lost Friends

Men tend to lose their shared friends disproportionately often compared to their wives. Friends you’ve shared with your spouse may be put in an awkward and difficult position by your divorce. Losing those friendships can significantly add to the emotional pain of what it means to be divorced.

Financial Changes

Gray divorces tend to involve more assets that need to be sorted out, including pensions, Social Security, 401k, and IRAs. You’ll need to completely reevaluate what your retirement portfolio looks like without your spouse, how your life insurance will be affected, how you’ll handle joint property and debts, and of course, reconsider your estate planning.

Think of the Children

The adult children of older couples may find their family fragmented, requiring them to think about where they’ll be spending the holidays, who gets to see the grandchildren, and how to split their time between their parents.

As we endure the declines in our health brought on by old age, we can usually rely on our spouse to help care for us. In their absence, you’ll have to start thinking about new arrangements.

Sometimes Divorce Works

Divorce after 50 can be an emotional process filled with anger, pain, frustration, and financial hardship. Nevertheless, sometimes divorce is your best option. Only by carefully considering the full ramifications of your divorce will you be prepared to deal with all the legal and financial issues that may result from your decision. Getting divorced is easy, but being divorced can be another matter altogether.

ACT Adult Enrichment For North Reading



What is ACT all about?

We are looking to create a team of people who want to live in N. Reading for the long term and want to create new and more fulfilling social connections at the same time. To make this happen, we need volunteers to join our already significant team of volunteers.

Our goals are:

- Advocate for a new community-friendly “downtown” area
- Advocate for a new intergenerational community center
- Advocate for attractive and affordable “empty nester” housing
- Provide services and support for the adults who need it so they can stay in their homes and community as long as possible including transportation and daily contact.
- Create a social calendar that will allow us to have fun and interact on an adult level for our ACT membership including formals, recreation, exercise, trips, and lifelong learning.

Change your future....Join ACT Today!

To learn more contact Rich Wallner at 978-807-3961 or rich@lakesidefi.com



LIHEAP FUEL ASSISTANCE

How It Works

- Aid is available to pay a portion of winter heating bills for the primary heat source.
 - Payments are made directly to the fuel provider. Applies only to oil, propane, coal, wood, gas, kerosene and electric.
 - Aid may be available even if your rent includes heat or you live in subsidized housing.
 - Supplemental benefit considered for eligible households with a high energy burden.
- We serve Lawrence, Methuen, Andover, North Andover, Reading and North Reading.

Who Qualifies?

You may qualify if the total annual gross income for all household members meets state and federal guidelines.

2016-2017 Income Guidelines

Household Members	Maximum Income*	Household Members	Maximum Income*
1	\$34,001	4	\$65,387
2	\$44,463	5	\$75,849
3	\$54,925	6	\$86,311

Applications accepted November 1 to April 30.

To apply for fuel assistance, you will need:

- Proof of income from all sources for the past 30 days for all household members 18 yrs and up.
- Social Security numbers and birth certificates for all household members.
- One of the following photo IDs: A valid government-issued ID, a student ID, or an employee ID.
- Current heating/utility bills to verify address.
- Proof of rent or mortgage payment amount. For renters, bring a current copy of lease/rent agreement. For homeowners, bring a copy of your mortgage statement, tax bill, and homeowner insurance premium.

New LIHEAP applicants must apply in person at GLCAC's LIHEAP office. Call (978) 681-4950 for an appointment. Home visits available to homebound handicapped and elderly new applicants. New applicants can schedule appointments using our **online scheduling system**.

Previous LIHEAP applicants will receive an application and instructions in the mail. No appointment necessary.

“Free” Tax Preparation

Each year AARP Foundation provides “free” tax assistance and preparation for North Reading taxpayers with low to moderate income through the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Program. They give special attention to those 60 and older. You do not need to be a member of the AARP or a retiree to use this free services.

Appointments can be made through the O’Leary Senior Center to make a reservation or request a ride to an appointment. More information will be available about dates and locations.

Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit

Be sure to ask your tax preparer to apply for a Circuit Breaker Tax Credit if you qualify. There are special guidelines to qualify. To receive this refundable credit you must file a Massachusetts Income Tax Return with schedule CB attached for each year eligible.

For more information contact the Massachusetts Department of Revenue:








1-800-392-6089 or www.mass.gov/dor

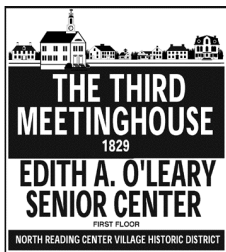
The following Senior Center Programs are FREE unless otherwise noted

Health and Wellness

Blood Pressure Screening North Reading Public Health Nurse: Suzanne Swansburg	Mondays 1:00 PM — No appointment needed At Edith A. O'Leary Senior Center
BEST Balance Energy Strength Training Instructor Pat Brennan	Monday mornings 9:00 AM Working toward strong bones, energized muscles, and overall better balance.
Exercise Instructor Emma Palmer	Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30 AM Involving gentle stretching, toning, strengthening.
SHINE Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders Counselor Geoff Bemis	Tuesday afternoons by appointment only to help answer questions and fill out applications. Call center to make an appointment.
Care Options Counselors Mystic Valley Elder Services 781-324-7705	Offering information and advice in a confidential set- ting, to elders and their families. By Appointment Only.
GLCAC Fuel Assistance Program Greater Lawrence Community Action Council Geraldine Portorreal Call the Center to set appointments	Second Tuesday of Month At the Center LIHEAP Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program Fuel assistance <i>See Insert</i>

ALSO AVAILABLE AT THE CENTER

	Senior Chorus — <i>Marcia Cutlip, Director</i> Mondays 10:30 AM. Singing is good for mind, body and soul!
	Wii Bowling Mondays 1:00 PM
	Bridge Tuesdays at 1:00 PM
	Bingo Wednesdays 1:15 PM
	Card Games Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:00 PM
	Project Linus Coffee Hour 1st Friday of the month, 10:00 AM Knitters and others that meet to work on projects. Making blankets for donation to Project Linus.
	North Reading Police offering Program for Citizens. Watch for more information. TBA Starting in March. Call the center for details.



NORTH READING ELDER AFFAIRS

157 PARK STREET

NORTH READING, MA 01864

Winter—2016 VOL. 41

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Save These Dates!

January 23: New Years at noon, Jim Moses,
Lunch: Chinese Food from China Cuisine

February 14: Valentines with Jim Barrineau

March 16: St. Patty's Day at noon with
Cartunes

April 6: Spring Fling with Howie Newman

April 8: Health Fair at North Reading High
School

Come in and sign up or contact the Center to
make reservations in advance.

North Reading Food Pantry

The Food Pantry, located in the North Reading Town Hall on North Street, is open Mondays 9 – 10:00AM, and every 1st and 3rd Monday 7:00 – 8:00PM. Transportation is available on Monday mornings. Please call in advance to arrange a ride. For times, dates, other details, or to make a reservation, please call the Center at 978-664-5600.

Our Very Special Thanks To:

- Meadow View Center for Wed. Bingo Donuts
- Wash. Street Dunkin Donuts for Tuesday morning treats
- Special Moms that donated the trays of cookies
- Friends of the COA for sponsoring a table at the Veterans Social and Thanksgiving meals
- Richard Curran — Sen. Tarr's representative —for his monthly visits
- Mikes Famous Roast Beef for generous support of our “social lunches” and the Halloween Party
- Volunteers of “Project Linus” group
- N. Reading Christian Community Services and Food Pantry for their kindness in supporting our elderly
- Welcome to Abby D’Orlando and Jillian Brooks, Class of 2018. Both will be helping with the newsletter for the next two years!
- Pam Denning for suppling the staff with fun outfits from the 1920’s
- Saint Theresa’s Church for donating Halloween goody bags
- Pat Fillmore dessert for Veteran’s Lunch
- Union Congregational Youth Group for Meals on Wheels magnets
- Girl Scout Troops for the Christmas gifts for our home delivered meal clients